



UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

Improving road safety in Africa: Where do we move from here?



Outline

- Road safety situation in Africa
- How the safe systems approach would help
- Findings from the AfroSAFE project
- Where do we go from here?



Global road safety situation



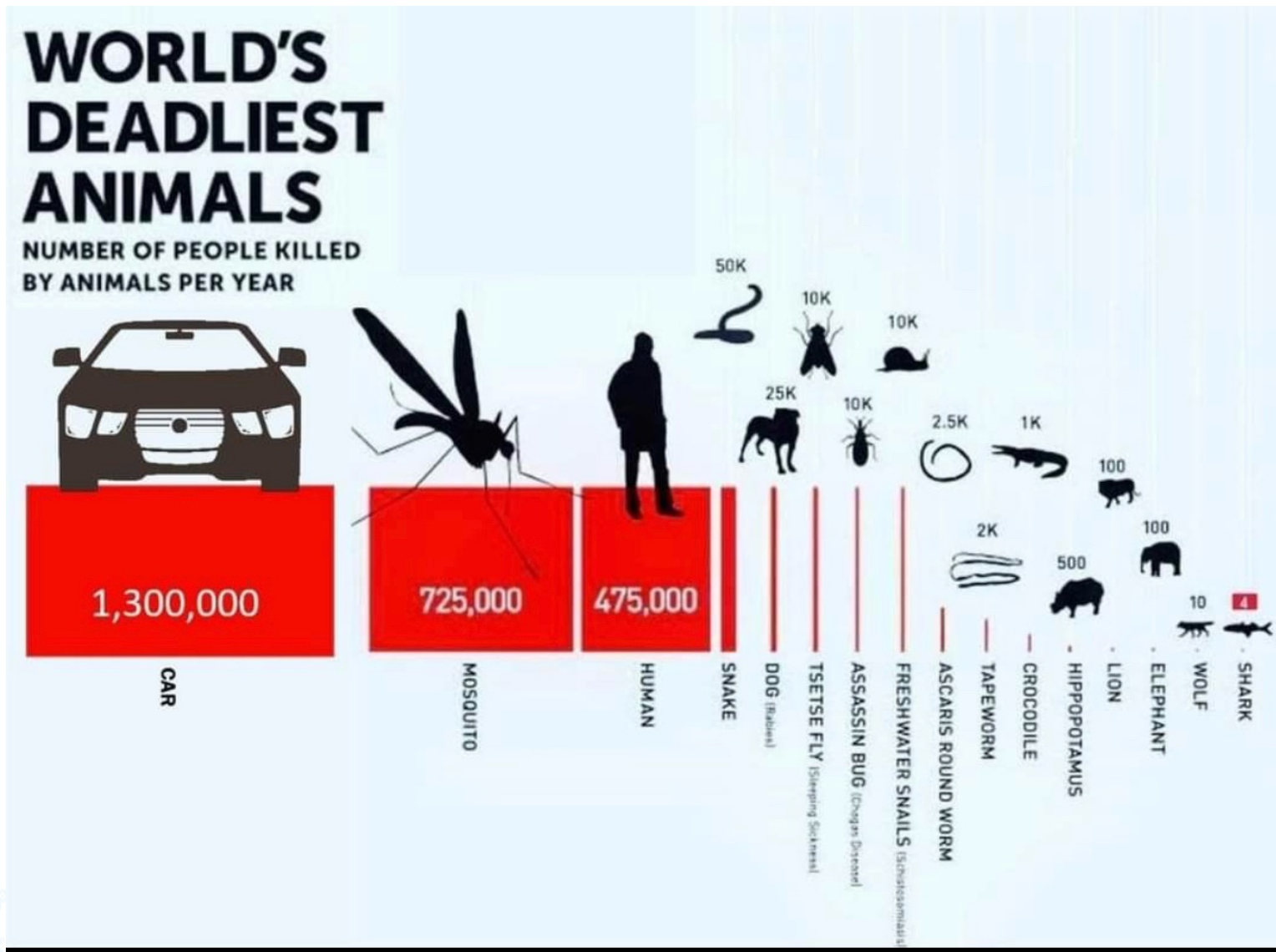


Global road safety situation cont'd

- An estimated 1.19 million road traffic deaths in 2021
 - a 5% drop when compared to the 2010 figure
- More than half of all UN member states reduced road traffic deaths between 2010 and 2021
- Efforts to improve road safety are working, but fall far short of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 target to halve deaths by 2030



Global Road safety situation cont'd





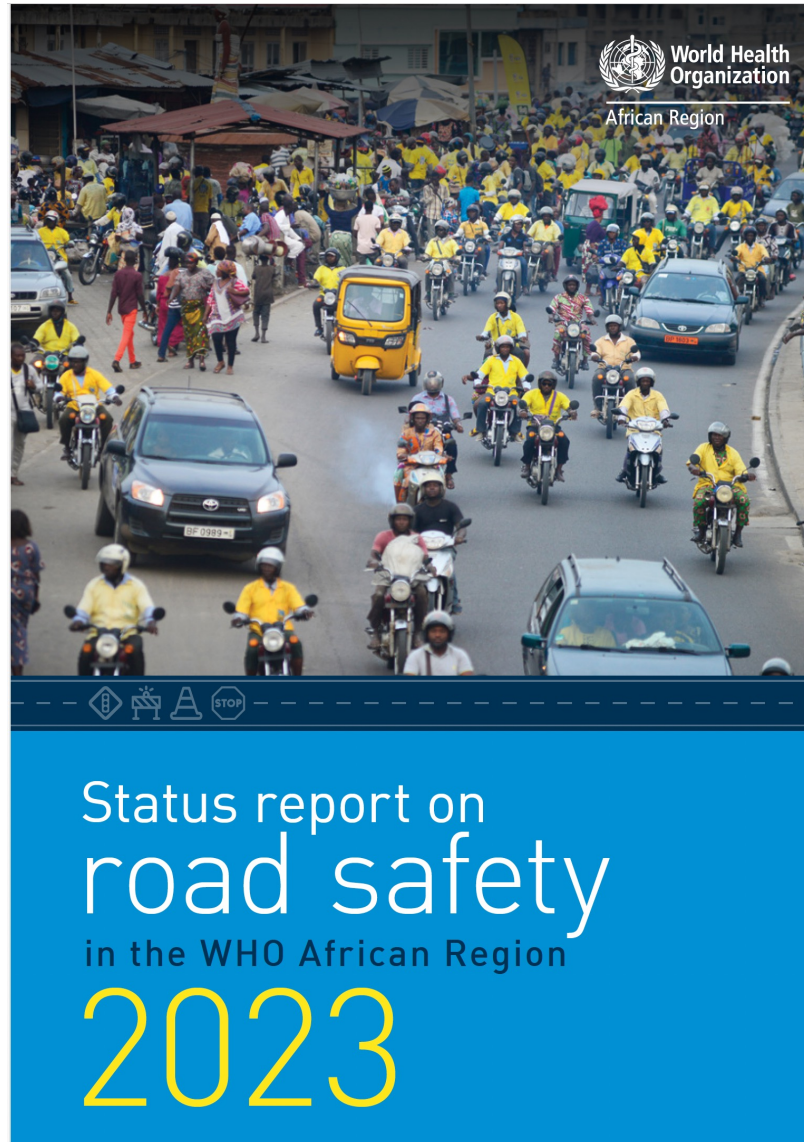
Global Road safety situation cont'd

The chance of dying in a road traffic crash depends on where you live





Road safety situation in Africa





Road safety situation in Africa

Road safety in the African Region:

Key facts and figures

In the WHO African Region, an estimated **225 482** people died from road traffic injuries in 2021, representing **19%** of the global burden of deaths, even though the African Region accounts for only **15%** of the global population and only **3%** of the global vehicle fleet.



The African Region holds the highest fatality rate, of **19.4 per 100 000** population, compared with a global rate of **15 per 100 000**.

The estimated number of fatalities in the Region has increased by **17%** since 2010. This is the only WHO region that has seen an increase in the number of fatalities during this period. However, **17** countries have reduced the number of fatalities, by **2% to 49%**, since 2010.



Vulnerable road users (two- or three-wheelers, cyclists and pedestrians) account for half of all fatalities - **50%**. Four-wheelers represent **32%**.



No country in the Region has national laws that meet best practices in all five key road safety behavioural risk factors (speeding, drink driving and non-use of motorcycle helmets, seatbelts and child restraints).

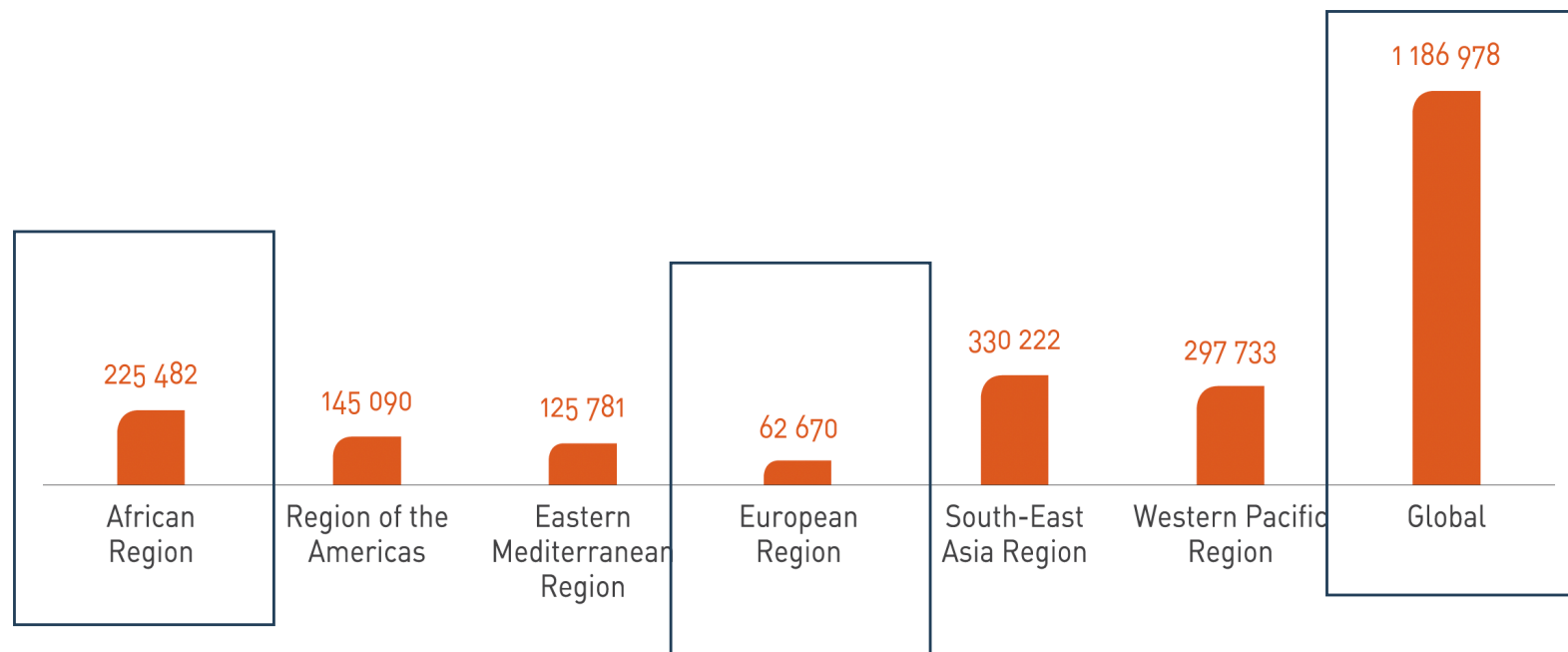


In 2021, there were **65.62 million** registered vehicles, representing a more than twofold increase since the publication of the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2013. There was a threefold increase in the number of two and three-wheelers in the same period.



Road safety situation in Africa cont'd

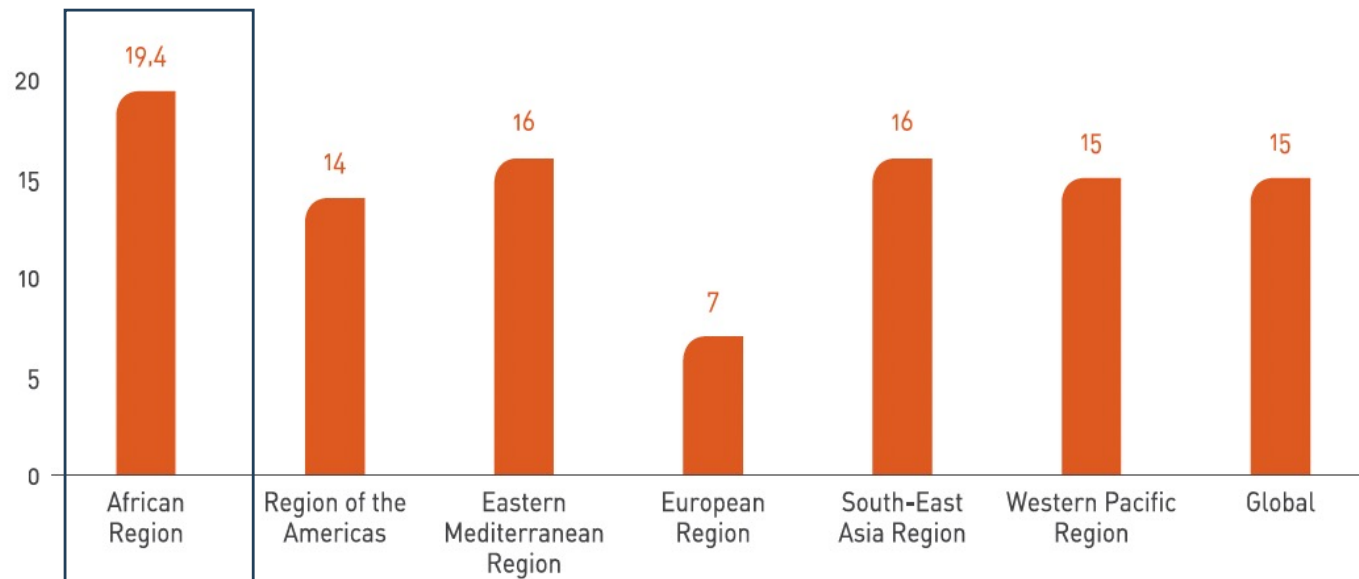
Fig. 2. Distribution of road traffic deaths by WHO region, 2021





Road safety situation in Africa cont'd

Fig. 4. Estimated road traffic fatality rate by WHO region per 100 000 population, 2021

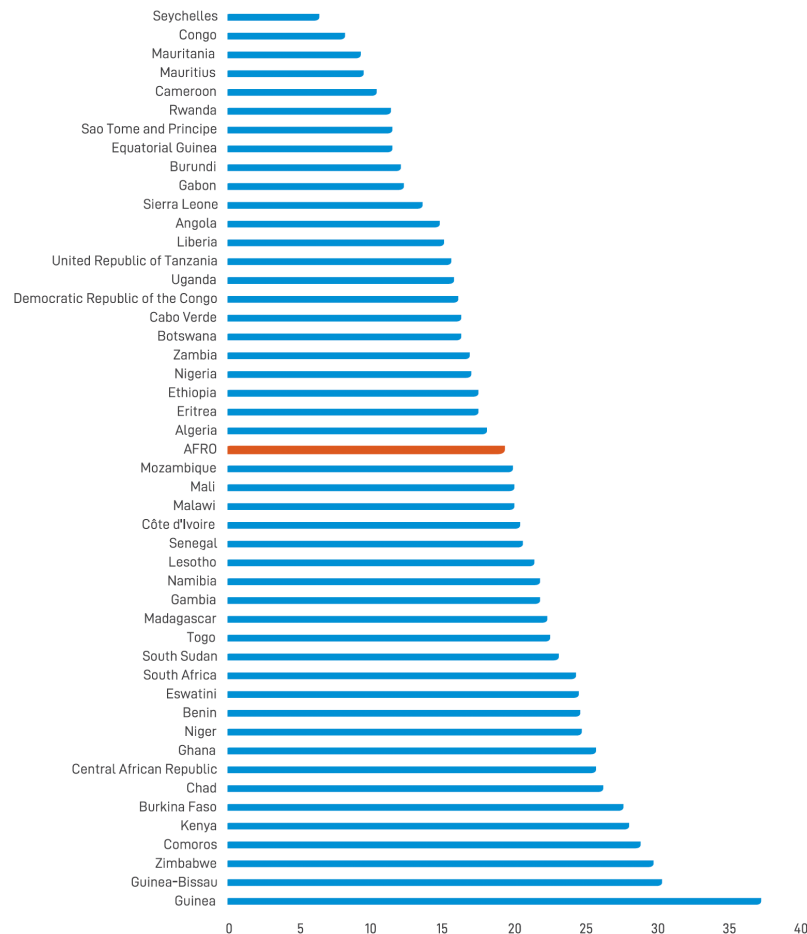




Road safety situation in Africa cont'd

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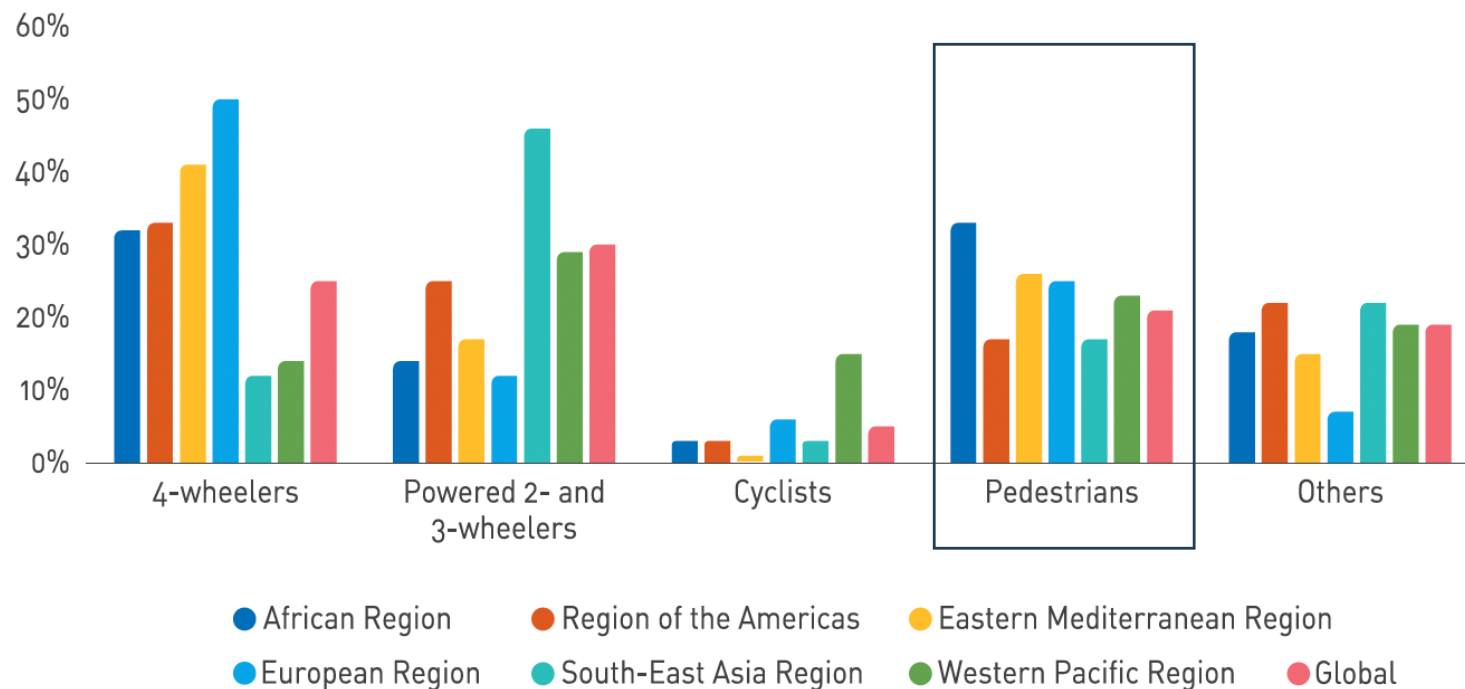
Fig. 5. Estimated road traffic fatality rates per 100 000 population by country, 2021





Road safety situation in Africa cont'd

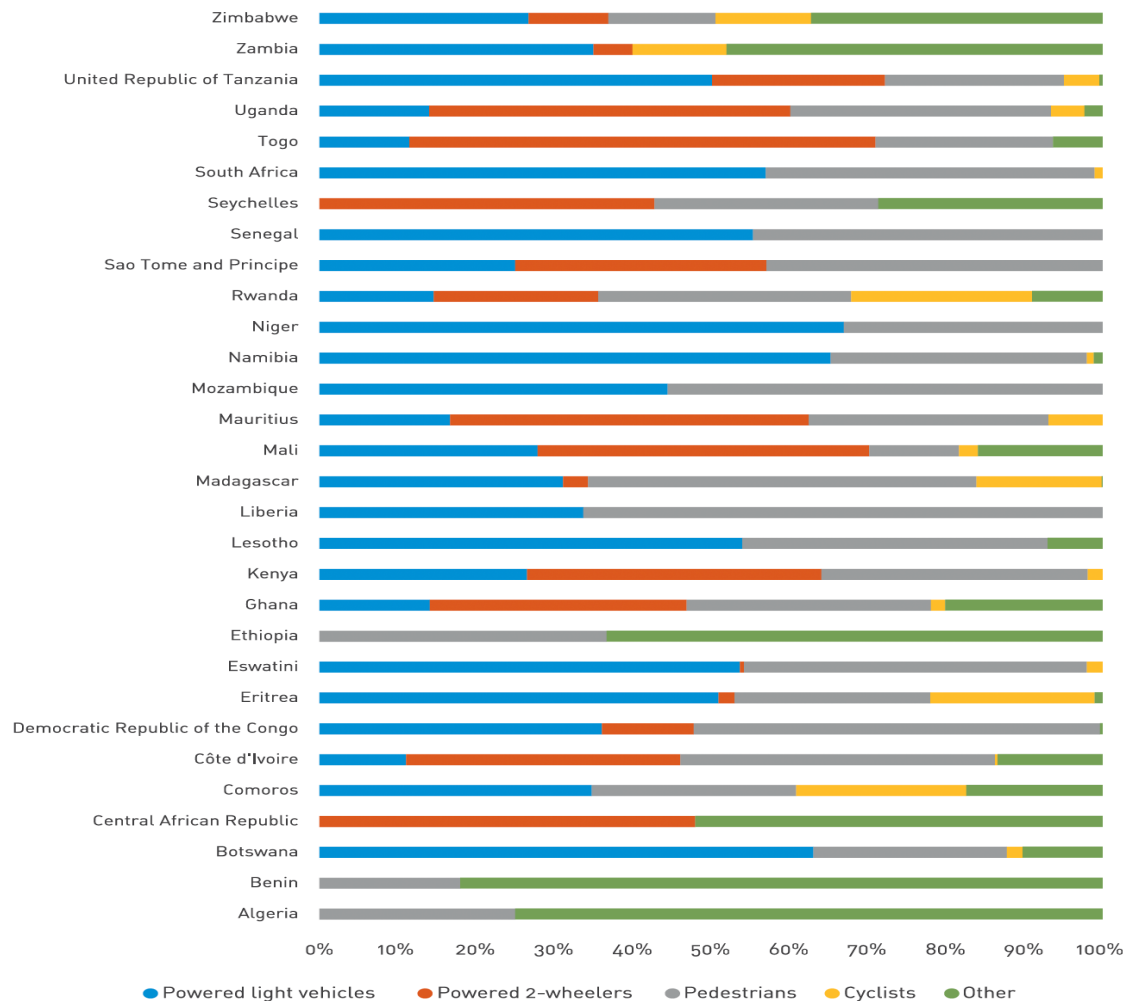
Fig. 6. Distribution of reported deaths by road user type and WHO region, 2021





Road safety situation in Africa cont'd

Fig. 7. Road traffic fatalities by road user type in selected WHO African Region countries (%)





Road safety situation in Africa cont'd

- Countries differ in their progress in mitigating the number and severity of road crashes.



Safe systems approach

GLOBAL PLAN

DECADE OF ACTION FOR ROAD SAFETY
2021-2030

The **Global Plan** describes what is needed to achieve that target, and calls on governments & partners to implement an integrated

**SAFE SYSTEM
APPROACH**

UN General Assembly Resolution 74/299 declared a **Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030**, with the target to reduce road traffic deaths & injuries

**BY AT
LEAST 50%** during that period





How would the safe systems approach help Africa?

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How would the safe systems approach help?



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AfroSAFE project

Safe System for radical improvement of road safety in African countries

The fundamental objective of the AfroSAFE project is to significantly advance the spread of the *Safe System* mode of operation in the context of road safety initiatives in African nations. This is achieved by exposing local practitioners and decision-makers to state-of-the-art knowledge and practices in road safety management based on Safe System principles, and by supporting them by sharing knowledge, tools, and methods for road safety improvement—adapted to African conditions and in close collaboration with local actors.



Horizon Europe Grant
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Findings from the AfroSAFE Project



Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

ScienceDirect

Transportation Research Procedia 89 (2025) 243–254

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African Transport Research Conference 2024 (ATRC-2024)

Safe system implementation in three African and three European countries: Preliminary results from a comparison of six countries

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Findings from the AfroSAFE Project

- 1) Describe, for each case country, the existing (**formal** and **informal**) system for road safety management.
- 2) Compare European vs. African countries' alignment with Safe System principles.
 - **Factors influencing the level of alignment**
- 3) Develop recommendations for revising existing national road safety programs, in line with Safe Systems principles



Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd

- 1) Document analyses (road safety (RS), national transport plans, etc.)
- 2) Focus groups with country experts (62 people working with RS in the 6 countries)
 - Collect data on national systems for managing traffic safety.
 - Compare national road safety challenges and systems for dealing with them.
 - Compare alignment with Safe System principles



Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd

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137



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REVIEW ARTICLE

Road Safety Management – The Need for a Systematic Approach

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Department of Technology and Society, Lund University, Lund, Sweden

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Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd

Alignment with safe system RSM (12-point framework; Varhelyi, 2016)

- 1) Define the burden and nature of road casualties
- 2) Gain commitment and support from decision makers
- 3) Establish road safety policy
- 4) Define institutional roles and responsibilities
- 5) Identify road safety problems
- 6) Set road safety targets



Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd

- 7) Formulate strategy and action plan
- 8) Allocate responsibility for measures
- 9) Ensure funding
- 10) Implement measures with known effects
- 11) Monitor performance
- 12) Stimulate research and capacity building



Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd

- European countries' RSM
 - **good alignment** between formal aspects and informal aspects
 - **systematic continuous improvement process** (Plan-Do-Check-Adjust)
 - relatively good accident statistics and data, exposure and risk for different groups
 - comprehensive safety performance indicators (SPIs)
 - quantified SPIs targets
 - strategies and action plans to improve the SPIs to reach the targets
 - defined responsibilities for implementing measures in the action plans
 - SPIs' performance and targets are monitored and reported regularly



Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd

- The African RSM systems
 - less aligned with the Safe Systems principles.
 - large **discrepancy** between the formal and informal aspects of RSM.
- The African countries have an insufficient systematic approach
 - **No general visions, e.g., Vision Zero, Safe System.**
 - **Insufficient accident data and indicators**
 - **Lacks a systematic continuous improvement process**



Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd

Why is there a discrepancy between formal and informal aspects

- Lacking funding for road safety (poor economy)
- Lacking institutional robustness
- Insufficient data on accidents
- Political will to support and fund road safety
- Lax enforcement and corruption



Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd



Project No. 101069500—AfroSAFE

AfroSAFE: Safe System for radical improvement of road safety in low- and middle-income African countries

HORIZON EUROPE—European Union's funding programme for research and innovation



Deliverable 2.1

State of road safety management in selected African countries—review and recommendations

24



Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd



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Deliverable 3.1

Road Infrastructure Safety Management Review of National Design Guidelines and Procedures



Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd

Key findings and recommendations

- Design guidelines do not cater for the needs of VRUs (no physical separation of VRUs)
- Road safety audit and road safety inspection are practised nationwide in the three countries; others are practiced **occasionally**
- National legislation does not explicitly say anything about RISM
- **Key recommendation:** Establish a national regulatory framework on procedures and responsibilities for RISM activities



Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd



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Deliverable 4.1:
**Safe Vehicles: Existing standards for vehicle
safety, including suggestions for updates**



Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd

Key findings and recommendations

- Imported vehicles have low crash roadworthiness
- Ghana, Tanzania and Zambia have not yet adopted the UN Vehicle Safety Regulation
- Awareness of consumer rating (NCAP) is very low in the three countries
- Need to develop clear and comprehensive vehicle scrappage policies
- **Key recommendation:** Urgent need to improve the level of crash roadworthiness of imported vehicles to African countries



Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd



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Deliverable D5.1

Current procedures and methodologies of national road safety work concerning road users in selected African countries



Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd

Key findings and recommendations

- Policies are in line with best practices, but few are implemented, enforced and monitored
- Permitted BAC limits (0.08g/dl) are high
- Drivers training and testing focus on lower-order skills
- Drivers speed above the posted speed limits
- Enforcement is lax
- **Key recommendation:** Implement, enforce and monitor the policies (continuous improvement process)



Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd



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HORIZON EUROPE—European Union's funding programme for research and innovation

Deliverable 6.1

Post-crash response mapping and data collection: Report



Findings from the AfroSAFE Project cont'd

Key findings and recommendations

- Inadequate training and resources for first responders
- Limited emergency medical infrastructure
- Coordination issues among key stakeholders
- **Key recommendation:** Implement extensive training programmes for emergency personnel, invest in medical facilities and equipment, and intensify awareness campaigns on emergency response protocols



Where do we go from here?

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Where do we go from here?



Where do we go from here? cont'd

- To ensure the best possible level of road safety, **planning** is required.
- RSM is complex and includes structures, plans, processes, outputs, tools, etc.
- Governments need to develop and implement short-term, medium-term, and long-term road safety policies.



Where do we go from here? cont'd

- WHO (2009) recommends that national governments ensure that:
 - The responsible institutions for road safety actions have the necessary human and financial resources to act effectively
 - They develop and endorse a national strategy with realistic targets and earmarked funding for implementation
 - They promote multi-sectoral collaboration in road safety work
 - They promote collaboration between the different sectors involved in collecting data on road traffic injuries



Where do we go from here? cont'd

- Urgent need for a systematic approach to road safety management with clear responsibilities and accountability



Thank You

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